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THE PIONEER PRESS

By Frances Case Theiss

The following is the first of a series of articles on fine printing in San Francisco by Frances Case Theiss. They were written as part of a thesis for a Master of Arts degree in librarianship at San Jose State College.

Theses, however excellent, have a hard time achieving book publication. It seemed to your editor a great pity that this one should languish unsung in some academic pigeon-hole. So, with the kind permission of the author, parts of her dissertation will appear periodically in the pages of the Quarterly.

D.M.

Printing has frequently been referred to as the "art preservative of all arts." As the present work is concerned with history and as history is preserved principally through the printed word, one might agree with Carl Wheat when he says that it is in the field of history that printing has rendered its most valuable service.

McMurtrie has remarked that whenever fifty or a hundred Americans settle permanently their first demand is for a newspaper. McMurtrie also pointed out that frontier printers were always found among the earliest parties of settlers and played a large part in the making, as well as the recording, of our history.²

Charles Murdock elaborated, commenting that in any new community newspapers solely represent the printing industry. Not only are they the principal expression of printing, he continued, but their presses also supply whatever other printing might be needed by the community.³



In the state of California, printing has been in the vanguard of every advance in the growth and development of the state. San Francisco was just a village of some 300 inhabitants when it acquired its first printing press. It was a Washington-type Hoe press, and it arrived in the town, then known as Yerba Buena, on July 31, 1846, aboard the ship *Brooklyn*, which was carrying Sam Brannan's Mormon colony to the west coast. Brannan also included a large assortment of type and a two years' supply of paper, as he was determined that the Mormons in this area would not be without a newspaper.⁴

Edward Cleveland Kemble was a member of Brannan's party, although he was a non-Mormon. He was seventeen years and eight months old when the ship landed.⁵ By September, 1846, quarters had been obtained for a printing plant in the second story loft of an old grist mill on Clay Street and the plant was ready to begin its operation.⁶ Young Kemble, who was to run the press, described

its installation:

Up those outside stairs with incredible difficulty and no small danger of being buried beneath the wreck, with the frame of a no. 4 Washington press across our stomachs, my fellow printer and I lifted and pushed and dragged that *Star* printing machine.⁷

On October 24, 1846, Kemble printed San Francisco's first publication, An Extra in Advance of the California Star, this being the name decided upon before the Brooklyn left New York. This publication preceded the first regular issue of the Star, which did not appear until January 9, 1847, The Extra sold for one "real"

(about twelve and one-half cents) per copy.9

By 1850, there were six daily papers in San Francisco. About fifty printers were employed and the presses handled job work in addition to their regular publications. Printing was more expensive in San Francisco than in the East, due largely to the fact that during the Gold Rush the papers had to pay their printers sixteen dollars a day, the prevailing wage in the gold fields, in order to keep the presses manned.¹⁰

These early printers had many problems and difficulties to surmount. Their supplies of paper, ink and type were expensive and delayed on the Cape Horn and Isthmus routes and there was, in

addition, a shortage of skilled workmen. The public, however, was willing for the most part to pay the necessarily high prices and the printing business in San Francisco was, on the whole, a

profitable one.

An additional hazard to beset early San Francisco printers was the frequency of fires in the city. Ward Ritchie pointed out that "within four years, the city had six really devastating ones. In one of them we read that 'a river of molten type ran down to the bay from a burning printer's establishment." Lloyd remarked that ". . . the standard of excellence it [journalism] has reached has been literally through fire and tribulation."

Frontier editing also had its hazards. Editors were frequently attacked for their opinions and occasionally were murdered. On August 2, 1852, Edward Gilbert, Edward Kemble's partner, was killed in a duel as the result of a political statement in their paper,

then named the Alta California.13

As to the quality of the printing in those pioneer days, one must remember that the craft of printing was in a state of worldwide decline during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The product of San Francisco printers was no exception. As an example of prevailing local printing standards, Ritchie described a menu of the St. Francis Hotel for January 19, 1850:

... nine different type faces and sizes were used in addition to a decorative border of type ornaments and rules. All of this on a narrow little sheet of paper two and three-fourths wide because of the scarcity of paper.¹⁴

A general complacency and indifference to quality in printing were also typical of the attitude of the local citizens toward the craft. The California Mountaineer for March, 1861, recorded the comment of an observer upon having toured the job shop of the Towne and Bacon printing company: "The art of printing has attained a degree of perfection among us that we are almost inclined to believe affords but little hope for improvement." John Hittell added that "the newspapers of the coast, as a class, have gained an honorable distinction by their careful study and intelligent elucidation of the local commerce and industries." ¹⁶

This, then, was the foundation from which the "California school" of fine printing, as Oscar Lewis referred it to, arose. 17

Until the middle 1860's, San Francisco printers, laboring under numerous difficulties, were totally pragmatic in their approach to their craft. The public demand was for newspapers and job work. These requirements were admirably filled by printers who were described by Edward Shinn as "a picked group of men, fertile in resources, energetic in execution, most of them young . . .," and the bulk of their work, ". . . printed under frontier difficulties, would do credit to the houses of the present day [1888]." 18

Neither the general condition of the printing industry nor conditions in San Francisco were ready to nurture the craft of fine printing at this time. It was only in the middle 1860's, when the city had become a cosmopolitan center of some 150,000 people, that it was ready to support a fine printer. As James Hart said:

A wealthy population that in the 1860's and 1870's had the sophistication and leisure to create an audience for the writings of Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Ambrose Bierce and Charles Warren Stoddard was also able to support a publisher who aimed at fine bookmaking.¹⁹

Notes

- ¹ Carl I. Wheat, The Pioneer Press of California (Oakland, California: Biobooks, 1948), p. 33.
- ² Douglas C. McMurtrie, "When the Pioneer Printers Moved Westward" (a talk given over twenty-five midwestern stations of the Affiliated Broadcasting Company September 26, 1936, under the auspices of the Chicago Historical Society), p. 1.

³ Charles A. Murdock, "History of Fine Printing in San Francisco," *Pacific Printer and Publisher*, 32, no. 4:258-9, October, 1924.

⁴ Haywood Hunt, The First Quarter Century of Craftsmanship in California (San

Francisco Club of Printing House Craftsmen, 1946), p. 9.

⁵ Henry R. Wagner, "A Brief Sketch of the Life of Edward Cleveland Kemble," California Historical Society Quarterly, 32:80, March, 1935.

6 Hunt, op. cit., p. 9.

⁷ Herbert Fahey, Early Printing in California (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1956), p. 52.

8 Wagner, op. cit., p. 80.

Gharlotte Lambert, Printing in California, 1846-1856 (privately printed), p. 10.
 Ward Ritchie, Job Printing in California (Los Angeles: Glen Dawson, 1955), p. 15.

11 Ibid., p. 19.

¹² B. E. Lloyd, *Lights and Shades in San Francisco* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, 1876), p. 187.

¹³ Edward Kemble, A History of California Newspapers, 1846-1857 (Los Gatos, California: The Talisman Press, 1962), p. 30.

14 Ritchie, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁵ Pioneers in Paper; The Story of Blake, Moffitt and Towne ("Published in Commemoration of the Organization's Seventy-fifth Birthday," 1930), p. 19.

¹⁶ John S. Hittell, The Commerce and Industries of the Pacific Coast of North America (Second edition; San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Company, 1882), p. 644.

¹⁷ Oscar Lewis, "The California School of Printing," Colophon, I, p. 3, August, 1930.
¹⁸ Charles Howard Shinn, "Early Books, Magazines and Bookmaking," The Overland Monthly, Second Series, 12:337-52, October, 1888.

19 James D. Hart, Fine Printing in California (Berkeley: Tamalpais Press, 1960), p. 2.

Recollections & Prejudices

By Roy Vernon Sowers*

In this probably final listing of Books & Prints from my personal collection I am tempted to a few backward glances at parting from them. Always more a collector than a bookseller, as I now realize, I ask myself why. Partly, I think it is a matter of perspective, of trying to relate the past, not only to the present, but also to the future. For some of us, perhaps unfortunately, it is as difficult to live only in the present, as it is for most of mankind to live anywhere else; and the historic role of the collector, supplementing in however limited fashion that of our great libraries, has been to preserve some of the past, in the hope that tomorrow, or a century hence, some of its lessons will be learned. Largely a vain hope, of course; and across the gap of fourteen centuries, one can sympathize with such a collector as Cassiodorus, laboring in his library, but knowing full well that nothing could save civilization from its imminent destruction by the Goths.

Of the world's literature through the centuries, what seems important varies from age to age—and with every individual; what we value today, may well be considered worthless tomorrow, just as one's enthusiasms at twenty have changed to others at seventy. During my apprenticeship at the Huntington Library, I wasted a lot of time copying second and third-rate Elizabethan verse of bawdy nature from the Bridgewater volumes and elsewhere; but

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looking at these notes after the lapse of forty years, their destruction seems no loss. Other enthusiasms, however, have survived and developed: that for the early herbals, for example, with their hundreds of woodcuts of plants, each with its medicinal "vertues" listed. In the thick folios of Gerard & Parkinson, and still more in very rare earlier ones of Dodoens & Turner, one finds not only botany, but a large part of the whole picture of 16th and 17th Century life; a time when each great country house had its "still room" and a part of each educated woman's responsibility was that of treating with the simple home remedies there prepared, most of the common ills to which today's doctors devote their lives. No wonder that such volumes were "read to pieces"; and no wonder that such as do survive bear the stains of use.

Also, there were the early atlases, antedating scientific cartography, but filled with quaint and beautiful engraved maps, as notable for their mermaids, tritons and sea-battles and legends of the unexplored world as for the parts accurately depicted. Of these, my favorite, by all odds, was and is the great pre-1600 Ortelius with the beautiful hand-coloring of its Antwerp period.

Certain books, too, are a sesame to bookish adventure: Putnam's Books and their Makers in the Middle Ages, Clark's Care of Books, Thompson's Mediaeval Libraries, Dibdin's Bibliographical Decameron and his Tours. Stimulated by the latter and following in his steps, I once visited the Austrian monastery of Gottweig and asked to see the 1469 Catholicon on vellum which he had mentioned as there in 1818. According to the rather uninterested librarian, it had long since vanished, but persistence gained me access to the incunable press, and there, hidden at one end, was found this mislaid folio with its magnificent illuminations. On an earlier European trip, having read somewhere of the fine 15th Century imprints at Montserrat, I asked to see them; and to my embarrassment the librarian replied: "But, Mr. Sowers! Those volumes were taken by Napoleon!" On such book-oriented trips in the thirties I also recall visits to the great bookshop of Joseph Baer & Sons, of Frankfort, where was a central room of two stories, four walls, packed from floor to high ceiling with naught but incunables—a greater stock than that of all present-day European dealers combined, and shortly to be dispersed and destroyed by the Nazis and the Second World War. Here also began my interest

in the early woodcut books, of which, even then, I could not afford the perfect copies; but, here and there, in Paris, Munich, Frankfort, Barcelona or London, I picked up fragments, single leaves, or on rare occasions, the almost complete copies such as several in this Catalogue.

this Catalogue.

To the great booksellers of those days, from whom I learned, by acquaintance or by catalogue, I must record my gratitude—Olschki, and Lier, of Florence; Belmore, and Rappaport, in Rome; Hoepli of Milan; Gilhofer & Ranschburg, Hittenberger, and Herbert Reichner, of Vienna; Boerner's of Leipzig; Dr. Weil, and Karl & Faber, in Munich; Hertzberger, of Amsterdam; Thiebaud,

Lambert, and Lauria, of Paris; and how many others!

In England, there were the dozens of great dealers in London, Quaritch, Maggs, Thorp, Davis & Orioli, Dr. Zeitlinger of Sotheran's, Batsford and many others; Grant and Thin in Edinburgh; and others throughout the whole country to justify book-hunting tours without end. And how few of them-or their shops-survive today. What a world it was for the collector, with almost daily sales at Sotheby's, or Christie's, or at Hodgson's old-fashioned rooms in Chancery Lane, sometimes at all three; the opportunities to handle thousands of books now vanished, to see the differences in quality of engraved plates, to learn why one volume was worth more guineas than another shillings; to see the giants of the booktrade raising each other a hundred guineas a time with the mere twitch of an eyebrow, and to expect the usual opening bid on any lot, by G.H. Last of Bromley: "Five shillings, sir."—and also, on occasion, to buy from him some important item which reached him despite the wariness of competitors. This was the finest bookish education I ever had; also, it was the end of an era, though none of us knew it. so

"The person which .. wil purposedly or with diligence frame to him a wel dressed Garden, shal after obtain these two commodities, as utility & delight: the utility yeeldeth the plenty of hearbs, flores, and fruits right delectable: but the pleasure of the same procureth a delight, and (as Varro writeth), a jucunditie of minde ... Lastly, by sight unto delectation and jucundity through the fragrancie of smell: but most of all, that the same may furnish the owners and husbandmans table with sundry seemely & dainty dishes to him of small cost."

The foregoing is quoted from the 1608 edition of Thomas Hyll's "Arte of Gardening," which, first appearing in 1563, was the first gardening book printed in England; and, indicative of the time, Hyll divides the beds of his garden between "delectable flowers to beautifie and refresh the house," kitchen herbs, and herbs for physic. Remote from our present-day mechanized world, it induces that sort of nostalgia which has led some of us to attempt a return to such peace and contentment. But "the simple life" involves, we find, not only a high cost in unaccustomed physical labor, but nowadays, the much more difficult adjustment to unaccustomed isolation and solitude.

Some of us can remember childhood before the general use of electricity, when water was hauled by bucket from a well, or pumped by hand, lighting was by kerosene lamp, and the few automobiles were objects of derision and of fright to the horses; when radio and television, or travel by plane were undreamed of. We walked to school, a mile or more, winter and summer, carrying our books and our lunch. We learned the 3 R's, and no nonsense; and if we misbehaved, we "got the strap"—and often a second session in the woodshed at home. Each of us had his daily chores—bringing home the cows for milking, carrying firewood, hoeing the garden weeds—but pocket-money meant a penny for an "all-day sucker," possibly once a week. Yet it never occurred to us that we were mistreated or "deprived" or that our misdeeds were somehow the consequence of parental failure. We had few things on our minds, and we were accustomed to observing animals, birds, spring flowers, the times of ripening apples, wild berries, hickory nuts and much else—as a matter of course. From birth, we had been accustomed to long periods of solitude, or of companship limited largely to our own family.

By contrast, the sophisticated schooling of today, whether better or not, has its benefits largely nullified by what the child sees and hears on commercial TV and radio, even before he enters school at all; and few would seriously contend that such conditioning to this world of sophistication, bad manners, violence and artificially created wants, is a proper preparation for the good life. My point, however, is that solitude, that absolute essential to independent

thought, has wholly vanished.

It is surprising, and disturbing, how few can now endure either solitude or silence. Noise—music, or non-music—has become habitual, in our homes and everywhere we go. Many of the young, and some, not so young, seriously believe that such noise is necessary to "study" or work! One does not need to be a psychiatrist to know that the computer is the logical guide for such a society.

Unfortunately, our youth, properly and justifiably protesting against the military-industrial monolith which America has become, have now allowed themselves to be diverted into mere rebellion as an end in itself. When university students abandon reason and descend to mob-action, it is sad; and it is doubly sad when they thus endanger the very survival of our one remaining bulwark of independent thought—our universities. The skies darken, and in a sort of "Gotterdammerung" we see the sub-culture

of the mass media engulfing the American dream!

Certainly, when the language of the Elizabethans and the King James Bible is replaced by a juvenile vocabulary of two dozen words such as "man; thing; hep; dig; turn on; and groovy," strung together with "you know's," one can see the consequences of universal education attuned to social adjustment rather than learning. Childish refusal to master our own English tongue has become that "failure of communication," for which the young (God save us!) disclaim all responsibility, because of "the generation gap." Thus the price we have paid for the commercialization of our airwaves, is not only the corruption of our language, but the breakdown of our society. Meantime, our corporations grow, our monopolies consolidate, mechanization proceeds, men become robots, and the few remaining beauties of our countryside are raped—in the name of Progress!

I am reminded of a letter, written in 1805, to John Adams, our second President, by the Philadelphia physician and signer, Benjamin Rush. In an earlier letter, Adams had spoken of excessive democracy as a distemper destroying true American principles. Rush, replying, told a story of the great Swedish botanist Linnaeus, who, in age, talking to a fellow naturalist in Upsala, pointed to some small boys thoughtlessly playing before his window:

"These are our judges!" he said.

As a booklover and as an orchardist of sorts, I have long enjoyed reading in the earlier writers on gardening and agriculture—Hill, Blagrave, Meager, Markham, Evelyn & Worlidge—not to mention Virgil's Georgics and that modern masterpiece, Sackville-West's The Land. Such books, as we know, were the familiars of Jefferson and the founding fathers but also, Horace, Plato, Bacon, Harrington, Locke and Hobbes. And I can scarcely end more gracefully than with Abraham Cowley's introductory words to Evelyn's Sylva: "I have never had any other desire so strong and so like to Covetousness, as that one which I have had always, that I might be Master at last of a small House and a large Garden, with very moderate Conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the Remainder of my Life only to the Culture of them, and Study of Nature."

The Founding of a Robert Louis Stevenson Museum in St. Helena

As a collection of Robert Louis Stevenson material began to grow and to contain many rare and priceless items, it became the dream of Norman H. Strouse and his wife, Charlotte, to establish a small museum in which the collection could be enjoyed by the public through exhibitions, and made available to scholars for research purposes.

Although the Strouses lived in the East after World War II, it had long been their plan to settle permanently in the St. Helena area at the end of his professional career. They spent many holidays in Napa Valley, and became acquainted with many of the landmarks described with such charm and enthusiasm in Stevenson's *The Silverado Squatters*.

In 1964 they acquired property bordering on Silverado Trail, and spent their summer months in a small cottage on it until Mr. Strouse's retirement in 1968, at which time they moved into their

new home on the old Wineberger property bordering the Trail just north of Deer Park Road.

Meanwhile, the Strouses had established a Vailima Foundation for the purpose of providing funds for the creation of a Stevenson Museum in the St. Helena area, into which the Stevenson collection of books, manuscripts and memorabilia would be placed as a permanent gift, and to which additional Stevenson material would

be given as it became available.

The ultimate objective of the Vailima Foundation is to build a permanent museum building, but as this might be several years away in its accomplishment, the decision was made to lease space in The Hatchery, an old stone building at 1345 Railroad Avenue, St. Helena, where the Museum could be opened with appropriate ceremonies on the 75th anniversary of the death of Robert Louis Stevenson. The importance of this anniversary has been recognized by the government of the British Virgin Islands through the issuance of a series of four Robert Louis Stevenson postage stamps showing scenes from Treasure Island; and by the government of Samoa with a series of four stamps showing scenes from Treasure Island, Kidnapped, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and Weir of Hermiston.

The availability of The Hatchery was fortuitous, the former tenant of the space having terminated the lease on ground floor space on August 15, 1969. The Hatchery was built in 1885, not long after Stevenson's brief residence in the Napa Valley, and is described in *California Wine Country* as "one of the finest examples of the early stone cutter's art." It is centrally located and convenient to the St. Helena Schools (one of which carries the name of Robert Louis Stevenson), as well as to visitors to the valley,

and there is ample free parking in the vicinity.

The Museum

The museum will be named *The Silverado Museum*, both in recognition of Stevenson's famous book about the valley, and consists the state of Silverado Trail in his honor.

sistent with the naming of Silverado Trail in his honor.

The museum will be open during specified but somewhat limited hours and for groups on special arrangement for the time being. It is the objective of the Trustees ultimately to retain a part- or full-time curator so that the hours available to the public can be extended.

The present Trustees of Vailima Foundation, who will direct the affairs of The Silverado Museum, are: Norman H. Strouse, Chairman; Charlotte A. Strouse, Vice-Chairman; Brent M. Abel, Secretary; Andrew Johnson, Jr., Treasurer. Other Trustees will be named.

Funds for the creation, maintenance and expansion of the collection of The Silverado Museum will be provided by the Vailima Foundation. No funds will be solicited from the public. However, gifts of Stevenson material suitable to the purposes of the museum will be encouraged.

A Friends of the Silverado Museum organization will be created at an appropriate time, to provide a vehicle through which interested residents of the Valley can assist in the development of an active program for the museum.

The Stevenson Collection

Considered one of the finest Stevenson collections in private hands, The Silverado Museum will contain over five hundred items, ranging from rare first editions, original appearances of Stevenson's works in periodicals, biographies, bibliographies and catalogues, to original manuscripts and autograph letters of Stevenson and Fanny Van der G. Stevenson, and memorabilia, including original portraits, Stevenson's writing desk from Vailima, and books from his library. Among the highlights from the collection are these:

First Editions:

The Pentland Rising, 1866. First printed work of the author.

Deacon Brodie, 1880. With corrections in the author's hand.

A Child's Garden of Verses, 1885. Inscribed to the author's wife: "Fanny Van der Grift Stevenson from her subject the author March 12th 1885."

Treasure Island, 1883. From the library of Jean Hersholt, the motion picture star, with his ex libris.

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, 1886. First edition in original paper cover.

Ticonderoga, 1887. One of only 50 copies, with autograph letter of author laid in.

St. Ives, 1898. With portion of original manuscript inserted.

Books from Stevenson's Library:

DANA, R. H. Two Years Before the Mast. With his bookplate from Skerryvore.

The Holy Bible. With bookplate from Vailima Library. Inscribed: "To Mr. R. L. Stevenson from P. C. September 1864."

JAMES, Henry. The Portrait of a Lady. With Vailima label, and signature of Isobel Strong.

TENNYSON, Alfred. Maud. With Vailima label, and signature of Isobel Strong.

Original Autograph Letters of Stevenson's:

1868, 2 October. Twelve page letter to his mother at the age of 18.

1868, Full page letter with long postscript on separate page, with original cartoon in his hand and two lines of verse in French.

1885, 6 January. Three page letter to The Right Honourable William Ewart Gladstone, soliciting aid in a projected life of the Duke of Wellington.

1887, Three page letter to Mrs. Charles Fairfield, with interesting references to Owen Wister, author of *The Virginian*.

1889, 1 December. Three page letter to his mother, written on Schooner Equator at 240 miles from Samoa on his second trip in the South Seas.

1890, April. Two page letter to his mother, written on steamer *Janet Nichol* during a trip to Sydney through the South Sea Islands.

1892, 20 June. Eight page letter written from Vailima Plantation to Sir James M. Barrie, expressing enthusiasm for Barrie's *The Little Minister*, and referring to Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

1894, 7 July. Seven and one-half page letter to Stanley Weyman, English novelist for whom Stevenson had great respect.

Original Manuscripts of Stevenson:

Drafts of verses on his famous portrait by John S. Sargent.

Nine page manuscript of essay on The Morals and Ethics of Life.

Two page manuscript of poem, The Sick Child, the last two stanzas of which have never been published.

Seventeen page manuscript of essay, On The Art of Literature, unpublished.

Manuscript of poem, To A Dusky Woman. Privately printed after his death.

Manuscript of The Gauger's Flute. Two lines struck out and revised.

Four separate manuscripts relating to *The Master of Ballantrae*, including the essay, *History of the Master of Ballantrae*, recounting the origin of his famous story, most of which has never been published.

Stevenson Portraits:

Original oil portrait of Stevenson, painted by Ernest Narjot in 1884. Narjot

was an early and very important California painter and teacher of painting. Original portrait painted on board, by Quilcotte.

Portrait in bronze basrelief by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the original of which is in St. Giles, Edinburgh.

Pen and ink and water color miniature portrait by H. W. Butt, signed Bournemouth, 1884.

Original macquette of sculpture of Stevenson by English artist, John Tweed; together with a bronze casting by Bruno Lucchesi.

Stevenson Memorabilia:

The writing desk Stevenson used at Vailima, Samoa, which he had inherited from his father, and which had been shipped to Vailima.

Original portrait of Isobel Osbourne Strong, painted by her artist husband, Joe Strong. Isobel, Stevenson's step-daughter, lived with the family in Vailima and acted as the author's amanuensis, and became a popular lecturer on Stevenson and the Samoans for many years after Stevenson's death.

Stevenson's original address-book, kept at Vailima, with entries in Stevenson's hand.

Stevenson's original bank book—joint account No. 177 with Margaret Isabella Stevenson (his mother) and Robert Louis Stevenson—the Bank of Australasia, Sydney Branch, 1891-1892.

Landscape Paintings Relating to Stevenson Country:

Landscape by Virgil Williams, early California painter and founder of the San Francisco School of Art. Scene is possibly the Napa River. Importantly is the fact that Virgil and Dora Williams were close friends of the Stevensons, and Dora Williams stood up with the Stevensons when they were married. In an unpublished letter from R.L.S. to Virgil Williams in the Beinecke Library, Yale University, Stevenson expresses gratitude for Mr. and Mrs. Williams' kindness to him in San Francisco when he was "sick, sad, and poor."

Original water color painting of the *Equator*, the ship the Stevensons chartered from Honolulu to the South Seas, as it rested on a platform in Everett, Washington in 1964, being restored after being raised from the mudflats where it had rested for many years after undistinguished service as a tugboat.

Original oil painting of Mt. St. Helena, as seen from the Knight's-Alexander Valley side, by Thomas Hill, signed and dated 1872. Along with William Keith, Thomas Hill was one of the two best known and most widely respected artists in this area during many years of his long life (1829-1908).

Original oil painting of the Old Bale Mill, by Sondag, 1933.

Fanny Van der G. Stevenson:

Over one hundred original letters, most of them to Margaret I. Stevenson, mother of R.L.S., reporting on the daily life of the author and his wife. None has been published.

Original diary kept in a folio journal by Mrs. Stevenson of the voyage of the *Janet Nichol*, April 18, 1890-July 29, 1890 through the South Seas. The diary was ultimately published under the name of Mrs. Stevenson, but all personal matters in it were deleted, and appear in this diary as unpublished.

Transcribers' Fancies

By RUTH TEISER

Miss Ruth Teiser has been engaged for some time now in tape-recording reminiscences of various Bay Area printers, authors, publishers, etc. Below are some hilarious mistakes made by the transcribers of these interviews. (Ed.)

THEY are called transcribers but occasionally they are transformers, so that a flat-bed press becomes a flattened press and books are hand-eliminated. Perhaps they are having us on, these typists who put the tape-recorded word on paper for the Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library, for their variations are rarely dull.

In the dozen or so interviews I recently conducted with printers and other participants in the world of fine printing in San Francisco, there appeared seven forms of a word that I can no longer spell correctly myself: collar form, collarphone, card form, caliphone, call form, color phone and caliphon. The rare early Grabhorn volume, The Laugh of Christ and Other Original Linnets, became They Laughed for Christ and 13 Other Original Linericks, and a 1957 publication of the Roxburghe Club appeared as German "Crabbers" (travelers) in California. Ed Grabhorn always smoked a "mission-type" pipe (meerschaum), and Bob Grabhorn always had a sticker in his hand. The "mere connoisseurs" they created turned out to be the Americana Series.

Three new presses appeared: the Kellserig of William Morris, the Cold of Jane Grabhorn and associates, and the Vanity, proprietor not specified.

Two different transcribers working on two different interviews were apparently in collusion about John Henry Nash's sobriety. One referred to him as "the greatest bar man in the printing business" (Barnum was what Albert Sperisen said) and the other described him as "a very drunky fellow" (grumpy was David Magee's original word). Still another transcriber made it safely through Lawton Kennedy's statement that "the pages were tipped in backing up" as in the original, only to have him describe the venerable Dr. Aurelia Henry Reinhardt as Erodyte. (A new goddess?). When Mallette Dean moved from San Francisco, he and a friend borrowed a geared wench to get his press down the staircase of his studio.

In connection with porter-press printing in general, there were discussions of halftone dock formation and typographic linaments. The design of desk jackets was also considered, calling to mind printers shedding their aprons in favor of special garments to be worn only while billing.

If readers doubt any of these, they unfortunately cannot check them, for they were all cleared up before the final typescripts.

Elected to Membership

The following have been elected since the publication of the Summer News-Letter:

Member	Address	Sponsor
William J. Watson	Eggertsville, N.Y.	Philip C. Duschnes
Mary S. Comara	Los Angeles	Maurice Read
Steven A. Waterson	San Francisco	Robert Haines
Leon J. Steinsapir, M.D.	Sacramento	Michael Harrison
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Harvey E. Starr, M.D. Los Angeles

Sustaining Members
George W. Leistner Stockton
Lewis Osborne Ashland, Oregon

The Book Club Library

and Recent Acquisitions

By ALBERT SPERISEN

With the recent purchase of Rapport sur les Recherches relatives à l'usage le plus Ancien de l'imprimerie Stereotypes, La Haye: Imprimerie d'Etat, 1833, by Baron de Westreenen de Tiellandt, an uncommon copy in its original boards and untrimmed, we believe that unless the Club is offered a unique example of an original stereotype or matrix (c. 1700) your committee has written "finis" to this subject. With this purchase the Club now owns all of the known important early books on this subject together with notable examples of its use. Now, it is expected that any would-be scholar can find here sufficient material to produce a learned paper on this much-discussed method of duplicating printing type-forms . . . and we extend this invitation.

Tiellandt here discusses (in Dutch and French) the merits of all of the "inventors" of stereotyping. His chief concern, however, is that of promoting Johann Muller, a minister of the German Lutheran church in Holland, as the original inventor. (See review in Winter Quarterly, 1967.) Muller's invention was not as some authorities claimed—merely soldering type together—which he possibly did, but he carried the process further, probably to the plaster of Paris mold method. One of these original Muller stereotype plates has been recently rediscovered. (See Printing and the Mind of Man catalogue, plate 8.) Our book contains three full page facsimile reproductions of early stereotyping by Muller, including a page from his Dutch Bible of 1711—a different page than the one reproduced in the Mind of Man catalogue. And a facsimile page from his Syriac-Latin New Testament of 1708. The last illustration is a copperplate facsimile of a manuscript page of Muller's dated 28 June 1709.

It could be that this book was overlooked by the compilers of the *Mind of Man* catalogue when that exhibition took place, otherwise we cannot account for it not being quoted. And this book is not listed in

Bigmore and Wyman.

O Tempora O Mores — A Discovery

During the remodeling of the Club's premises, in tearing out a wall workman discovered this prospectus of a former tenant. It had somehow found its way into a crack where it had remained, perfectly preserved, for at least three decades. It was like finding a time capsule. Indeed, Mr. Wilson, in puckish mood, may have secreted it for some such purpose.

We reproduce it here in the interest of history — commercial history of the '30s — and as a reminder of those dear dead days when a pound of hamburger cost 19 cents and you could rent (as you can see) a classical phonograph record for 4 cents a day.

This hoary old editor remembers well Mr. Wilson's Record Library, though he does not recall the shop at 545 Sutter Street. Perhaps he joined later when the proprietor had moved to a basement shop on Taylor Street, close to the Bohemian Club.

The Depression was not a happy time for the Book Club, but for a borrower of records those were halcyon days. An album (six records) of a Beethoven symphony for 24 cents!

A printed memorial to the late Charles A. Borden, writer, critic, master mariner and conservationist, is available at the book shop, San Francisco Maritime Museum. Proceeds go to the Nature Conservancy, to which Mr. Borden deeded his home and land at Spindrift point beyond Muir Beach, Marin county, before his untimely death in June 1968.

Borden authored a variety of books—Oceania; He Sailed With Captain Cook; South Sea Islands; Hawaii: Fiftieth State; and the very successful Sea Quest: Global Adventuring in Small Craft.

The booklet was designed and produced in a limited edition of 500 copies by Marin county printer, Arlen Philpott, The Tamal Land Press, Fairfax. Price is \$2.00. Checks to be made out to The Nature Conservancy.

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Renovation of Club rooms

It was, I believe, Sigmund Freud who said that people who constantly rearranged furniture were sexually frustrated. If this be so the members of the Remodeling Committee are in a bad way. For never in the history of the Club has there been so much shifting of sofas, chairs, exhibit cases, desks and the like. Even our historic Columbian press, which must weigh a ton, has suffered a move from the position it has occupied for the past fifteen years.

To those who have not visited the Club rooms during the renovations a brief survey of what has been done may be in order. First, we have rented the room to the west of the present quarters. This necessitated the knocking down of part of the wall that divided the two rooms. One section was to be retained to enclose a work area. On the morning when the workmen were to begin demolition your editor popped in to see how they were getting along. Imagine his consternation when he discovered that they had removed the whole wall! Well, no matter; they rebuilt it the next day.

As we go to press all the alteration work has been done. We are now freshly painted, carpeted, and the above-mentioned shifting of furniture is in full swing. A few days ago the exhibit cases arrived. They are handsome glass and chrome affairs on mahogany bases. They looked splendid to the Committee until someone noticed that no provision had been made for the glass shelves. As they stand now they would be excellent for exhibiting Egyptian mummies or the elephant folio edition of Audubon. No doubt this error will be rectified.

By the time this issue of the *Quarterly* reaches you it is hoped that everything will be in apple-pie order and the Committee will have recovered from their nervous breakdowns.

D.M.

Wisit of Reynolds Stone

Sometime in the Fall of this year, Reynolds Stone, world-famed British book decorator, calligrapher and wood-engraver, will be visiting the Bay Area. During his stay here, Mr. Stone will accept commissions for bookplates, book-labels, calligraphy and lettering. Inquiries may be made through his son, Humphrey Stone, The Hacienda, 830 Escondido Road, Stanford, California 94305.



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